

# A European survey of management approaches in chronic urticaria in children: EAACI Paediatric Urticaria Taskforce

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## Abstract

**Background:** Although well described in adults, there are scarce and heterogeneous data on the diagnosis and management of chronic urticaria (CU) in children (0-18 years) throughout Europe. Our aim was to explore country differences and identify the extent to which the EAACI/GA<sup>2</sup>LEN/EDF/WAO guideline recommendations for paediatric urticaria are implemented. **Methods:** The EAACI Taskforce for paediatric CU disseminated an online clinical survey among EAACI paediatric section members. Members were asked to answer 35 multiple choice questions on current practices in their respective centres. **Results:** The survey was sent to 2,773 physicians of whom 358 (13.8%) responded, mainly paediatric allergists (80%) and paediatricians (49.7%), working in 69 countries. For diagnosis, Southern European countries used significantly more routine tests (e.g., autoimmune testing, allergological tests, and parasitic investigation) than Northern European countries. Most respondents (60.3%) used a 2nd generation antihistamine as first- line treatment of whom 64.8% up dosed as a second- line. Omalizumab, was used as a second line treatment by 1.7% and third-line by 20.7% of respondents. Most clinicians (65%) follow EAACI/WAO/GA<sup>2</sup>LEN/EDF guidelines when diagnosing CU, and only 7.3% follow no specific guidelines. Some clinicians prefer to follow national guidelines

(18.4%, mainly Northern European) or the AAAAI practice parameter (1.7%). Conclusions: Even though most members of the Paediatric Section of EAACI are familiar with the EAACI/WAO/GA2LEN/EDF guidelines, a significant number do not follow them. Also, the large variation in diagnosis and treatment strengthens the need to re-evaluate, update and standardize guidelines on the diagnosis and management of CU in children.

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Figure 1. Percentage of chronic urticaria patients complain of angioedema as indicated by the respondents



